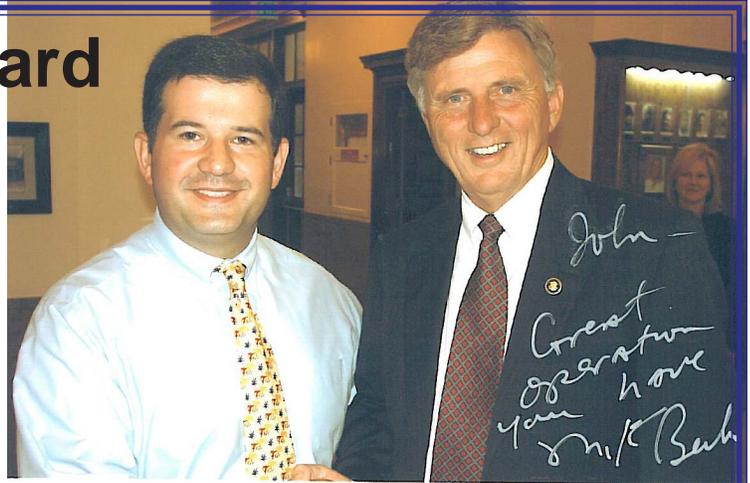


Changing of the Guard

By Mari Serebrov

“Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful, it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful, it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident, it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.” —King Whitney Jr.



Any time a new governor takes the oath of office, there is bound to be change. And fear. And hope. And inspiration.

Tuesday will be no different as Mike Beebe takes the oath to serve the people of Arkansas and uphold the state’s Constitution as our new governor.

Coming one day after the 2007 General Assembly convenes, Beebe’s inauguration will mark the end of the Huckabee decade. All eyes will be on the new governor as he maps out his path for Arkansas’ future. While the transition from governor-elect to governor will be over, the true transition will just be beginning – for Gov. Beebe, for his family, for state government, and for the people of Arkansas.

Beebe is no stranger to change. In his campaign, he frequently referred to his personal metamorphosis – one that took him from humble beginnings in Amagon, Arkansas, to becoming a state leader, respected for his practicality and ability to get things done. In his case, the agent of change was education. Thus, education was a priority in his platform. And as the state’s 54th attorney general, Beebe was committed to promoting policies and enforcing laws that give Arkansas’ young people a safe environment and a brighter future.

“Mike Beebe has always been a champion of education, especially workforce development,” John Wyvill, DWE director, says. “We as an agency look forward to working with the new governor as we fulfill our mission of providing the resources and leadership necessary to train Arkansas’ workforce for the 21st century.”

The governor-elect knows first-hand that education is an investment in the future – for both individuals and the state. It is an opportunity that cannot be taken for granted or squandered. After a childhood of moving from state to state in his mother’s efforts to make ends meet, Beebe returned to Arkansas to graduate from Newport High School in 1964. Four years later, he graduated from Arkansas State University with a bachelor’s in political science. While serving in the Army Reserves, he earned his law degree from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Upon graduation from law school, Beebe went to work for a Searcy law firm that would eventually bear his name. Meanwhile, he wasted no time in getting involved in public service. His first call to duty was as a member, and then chairman, of the ASU Board of Trustees. A few years later, he ran for the Arkansas Senate in what became a 20-year commitment capped by a term as Senate president pro tempore.

“As a state senator and as attorney general, I have worked for more than 20 years to represent the people of our state, to protect our well-being, and to pursue our common goals,” Beebe said on his campaign Web site. “I believe in Arkansas and I believe that, together, we can build a healthier, more prosperous future for ourselves, our children, and the generations to come.”

Here’s to change – and the challenge that exists to continue to make things better in Arkansas.